

Online Comment by User: Isanphil

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Comment Category: General Comments

Comment Location: Chapter-3, Page-1

Address: , , 98195

Comment:

I-0689-001 | It is clear that the 520 bridge needs to be replaced for structural reasons and increased traffic needs.

What is not clear, is why a tube tunnel was not one of the alternatives studied. It is just one option, but unlike the rebuild it could be the option that greatly reduces the impacts to the environment, to the Washington Park Arboretum and to the visual and audio impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods.

I-0689-002 | The loss of wetlands in a rebuild will affect many animals in the food web - among the most economically significant is salmon. Other animals affected would be the hundreds of species of migratory songbirds and waterfowl, the Merlin Falcon ("...the Merlin is less common than the Peregrine Falcon!" <http://www.merlinfalconfoundation.org/>), the mated American Bald Eagles (currently building a nest near Foster Island), the Beaver and the myriad of other important species that are integral to the food web.

The loss of wetlands reduces the number of school children who can be educated on the importance of the Food Web in an ecosystem such as the Fresh Water Marshes that surround Lake Washington. Of course, there are also the aesthetics of a wetland area and the psychological need for such spaces.

I-0689-003 | Something that is not really present in the EIS is how these alternatives interact with Mayor Nickels 2006-2007 Environmental Agenda (see below for the full press release) or how it interacts/ takes into account the Kyoto Agreement standards - at least for the portion of the project that takes physical space in Seattle.

I-0689-004 | How is it effective or efficient to build something that removes trees considering the City of Seattle is going to great lengths and expense to ADD trees to the urban environment. The city recently spent time and money restoring many wetlands around Lake Washington just in time for a 520 rebuild alternative to remove and shade out - that doesn't make any sense.

I-0689-005 | Would a tube tunnel be less destructive? Would more trees and more wetlands and more vistas be left in tact? How can we possibly make a decision on something as important as this project until an impartial study is done on how a tube tunnel will affect the environment, the neighbors and the traffic?

I implore you to allow the tube tunnel to be studied and considered as an alternative to rebuilding.

From the Mayor's website <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/>

I-0689-001

Comment Summary:

Tube/Tunnel Concepts

Response:

See Section 1.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0689-002

Comment Summary:

Wildlife Effects

Response:

See Section 16.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0689-003

Comment Summary:

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

Response:

See Section 14.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0689-004

Comment Summary:

Wetland Shading Effects

Response:

See Section 16.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0689-005

Comment Summary:

Tube/Tunnel Concepts

NEWS ADVISORY

SUBJECT: Mayor Nickels Announces 2006-2007 Environmental Agenda
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
7/27/2006 11:00:00 AM FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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Mayor Nickels Announces 2006-2007 Environmental Agenda
Builds on climate change leadership; announces first-ever forest management plan

SEATTLE -- Mayor Greg Nickels has released the city's 2006-2007 Environmental Action Agenda, which builds on Seattle's leadership in the fight against climate change and outlines how the city will restore its urban forest, protect water quality and build healthy communities.

The four pillars of the Action Agenda - the Climate Change Initiative, the Restore Our Waters program, the Green Seattle Initiative and Healthy People & Communities - link the health of the urban ecosystems to the prosperity, health and social equity of the city as a whole.

"A healthy urban environment isn't just a nice thing to have," Nickels said. "It's vital to the health of our residents and our economy. That's why this Environmental Action Agenda is such an important part of my administration."

This fall the city will release for comment the Urban Forest Management Plan -- the first-ever comprehensive plan for restoring and managing Seattle's urban forest. Because of construction, invasive plants and old-age, the city's tree cover has shrunk from 40 percent of the city in 1972 to just 18 percent today.

The plan will guide the city as it strives to meet aggressive tree planting goals on public and private land, and will detail tree maintenance and restoration plans that will preserve the forest's beauty and ability to help clean the air and water.

Also this fall, the mayor will unveil the Seattle Climate Action Plan, which will guide the city in specific measures to further reduce its greenhouse gas emissions as well as detail ways the city can lead residents and businesses in the fight against climate disruption.

The city is succeeding in protecting aquatic habitat and water quality and will continue to do so under the 2006-2007 Agenda. It has completed shoreline restoration of Green Lake and Lake Washington, built 42 blocks of natural drainage systems, and enacted progressive development protections for ecologically sensitive areas. The agenda calls for new incentives for property owners to manage storm water on their own land and new capital improvement projects aimed at improving water quality.

Response:

See Section 1.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

The Healthy People & Communities program will continue to strengthen the city's Green Building Program; push for improvement of transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and work to increase housing choices in neighborhoods across the city.

To see the recent accomplishments and key next steps in each of the four Agenda areas, go to www.seattle.gov/environment.